

KDLA Report

Report to the KLA Board
June 15, 2013

Public Library Lawsuits

Adverse rulings against the Kenton County and Campbell County Public libraries regarding setting of tax rates are being appealed. The libraries are awaiting a decision by the Supreme Court as to whether the Court will hear the appeals or whether the appeals should go first to the Court of Appeals. The libraries are also asking the Supreme Court to stay the decision of the circuit courts so that the tax rates for this year will remain the same as last year's. Otherwise, both libraries will immediately lose substantial funding. These rulings could affect 77 other libraries. A similar suit in Boone County could impact 20 more libraries. Losses to Kentucky's libraries could be up to \$65 million per year. Plans are being developed for assisting with the appeal.

HB1 implementation

KDLA is working with the State Auditor's Office for implementation of the provisions of HB1 which was passed by the Legislature this spring. By Jan. 1, 2014 all Special Purpose Government Entities (including all but one public library) must register on the website of the Department for Local Government and adopt their county's ethics code. Forms are being developed for registration. Public libraries are now reviewing their county's ethics code. There are significant issues with some county ethics codes. For 2014, budget forms are being developed that will be used by the SPGEs. Also beginning in January 2012, all tax or fee increases must be reported to the fiscal court.

National Legislative Day

A delegation of 11 librarians, Friends, and trustees attended the ALA briefing for National Legislative Day and then visited the office of all Kentucky Congressmen and Senators to promote libraries. The delegation met with both Senators and 4 Congressmen and the staff of the other 2 Congressmen. Major issues discussed included funding of the Library Services and Technology Act and the e-rate program, the LEARN Act, and the Workforce Investment Act.

Meeting with White House Staff

At National Legislative Day, I – along with other State Librarians – was able to meet with White House staff to discuss how libraries could be involved in the initiatives of the Obama Administration. We were warned that the Administration is expecting libraries to be center of information for people seeking information about the Affordable Care Act this fall when all Americans are required to obtain health insurance. Information about the options will be available on line, so many are expected to come to libraries to access computers and use the library's internet access.

The Administration is also hopeful that libraries can provide services for pre-schoolers as it is a goal to have every child ready to enter kindergarten.

Budget/Pension Costs

KDLA has survived the 2012-13 fiscal year without a budget reduction for the first time in 5 years. However, KDLA is awaiting information on the additional costs to its budget as a result of the legislation passed to address the shortfall in the state pension system. It is likely that there will be an additional cost that will require shifting funds from other accounts. We are uncertain of the impact to our services that will result.

IT Consolidation

As of July 1, 2013, all IT functions of state government will be consolidated at the state level. KDLA's 4 staff members who manage our IT operation have been transferred to the Commonwealth Office of Technology. Rather than pay for our own IT services, these services will be provided by COT and billed to KDLA. The consolidation comes at an opportune time for KDLA as our IT staff has been shrinking in recent years while our infrastructure is aging. As a result, we asked that the consolidation proceed ahead of schedule and some actions have already taken place. A complete assessment of IT resources and issues has been completed. We are unsure of the impact on our budget, but we expect improved service over the long range.

BTOP wrap-up

The very successful federal grant program that enabled KDLA to fund expansion of public computing centers at 45 libraries will be coming to a close in July. This program resulted from the stimulus program. Results have been dramatic and transformed services at many of the libraries. Over the next few months, the final reports will be written and the project will be closed out. KDLA staff has spent many, many hours managing this program, but it has been well worth the effort.

Summer plans

We are continuing our collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education for summer reading. A new app for using the Lexile formula has been developed that we will be promoting with KDE. We will also be partnering with the Kentucky Education Savings Plan Trust again this year to promote KESP and offer a scholarship to one child from each region of the state.

We will also build on the successful program conducted for the first time last year in which libraries collaborated with local school districts to promote summer reading for children who were participating in the summer lunch program. Charlene Davis and her staff learned much from the program and 8 new libraries will be joining 8 libraries that participated in the program last year.

Annual reports and statistics

With the end of the fiscal year on June 30, the process of collecting annual library statistics will begin. We have noticed in recent years that the statistics on which we have relied to report library usage no longer reflect an accurate picture of what is happening in libraries. A committee of librarians and KDLA staff are working on some new measurements that we can use to accurately present the activity that is occurring in public libraries.

State Records Center

Construction of the new State Records Center in Frankfort is underway. Staff is in the process of selecting a software package for managing the records. Planning the move of 200,000 boxes, shelving, and equipment will begin soon. The new records center should be completed around January 1 and the moving can begin.